

Arlington County Sports Commission

Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday November 19, 2015
Time: 7:00pm
Place: Langston Community Center Room 106

Attending:

Jennifer Lainhart, DPR Staff Liaison (outgoing)	Shirley Brothwell, Member
Josh Colman DPR Staff Liaison (incoming)	George C. Towner, Jr., Member
Craig Esherick, Chair	Stephen Finn P&R Commission Member
Heather Cocozza, Member	Justin Wilt (visitor)
Deborah Defranco APS Staff Liaison	John Foti (visitor)
Doug Ross, Member	Kurt Louis DPR PNR staff
Mauricio Coreas, Member	Jeff Winkle DPR PNR staff
David Tornquist, Member	Sal D'Itri Community Facilities Study Member

Members Absent: Asha Patton, Steve Severn, Regina Kouba, Ellen Killalea

Agenda:

- I. **Approve Past Meeting Minutes (moved after Item IV)**
- II. **Batting Cages – Parks and Natural Resources Staff**
- III. **Field Information – Parks and Natural Resources Staff**
- IV. **Community Facilities Study Update-Sal D'Itri**
- V. **Donation Policy re-cap and discussion**
- VI. **Williamsburg Field Update - Severn**
- VII. **Long Bridge Park Advisory Group/Aquatics Update– Doug**
- VIII. **Projects and Themes Updates review**
- IX. **Ongoing county forums or other workgroups check**

Agenda Item	Discussion, Consensus & Action Items
<p>I. Batting Cages (7:00-7:10pm)</p>	<p>Joined by Kurt Louis and Jeff Winkle of Parks and Natural Resources. Jeff Winkle spoke about the visits they made to determine sites for cages at Westover, were not able to put them at ATS, Ft. Scott. Tuckahoe has plans for 2 new ones. Westover's cage is 12ft wide. When it opened there were 3 complaints about safety and the poles being on the inside instead of outside of cage. Worked on nets, and set placement of the batter. New county safety specialist Sharon Dudley (background in Softball) came to inspect the cages, she indicated padding doesn't deaden the force and will only make the poles a larger target to hit. No injuries were reported at Barcroft whose cages are constructed in the same manner. Groups need to make sure injuries/accidents are reported to their liaison.</p> <p>Future projects will include batting cages including Tuckahoe (2), Stratford (designed) and Bluemont (out to bid). These will be larger, with poles outside frame and hanging nets similar to those at Quincy park.</p> <p>The batting cage at Westover has been fixed mostly, but they are going to look closer at the tightness of the inside net. The cage is very similar to GW except the poles inside. With AstroTurf. There is 2 ft. gap at GW and only 1 ft. at Westover. Want to tighten the net and move fenced fabric in. This was a risk at this location because of the size and the field fun group decided to move forward even though there was a smaller space allocated.</p> <p>Stratford design has cages slotted more towards Old Dominion. 2 bull pens and 1 batting cage in addition to tennis and basketball courts. Discussion of entrance ramp from Old Dominion to new Stratford. There is a road vote on 12/3 by the BLPC. This does not affect the park project. It does affect the lower parking lot. This decision will affect the size of the field (APS property).</p> <p>Bluemont designs has cages on Field 3 closest to tennis court area. This a continuation of Ashlawn batting cage issue.</p>
<p>Action Items:</p>	<p>Remind parent baseball/softball organizations to report injuries/accidents as a result of batting cage use.</p>
<p>II. Field Information (7:10-7:35pm)</p>	<p>Referenced Slide 11 from DPRs presentation to the board on 11/10 available online here: http://departments.arlingtonva.us/2729-2/ Commission wanted more information about overall field information for the county.</p> <p>Craig wanted input from Kurt and PNR on field that need work. Would like to be able to review the source of the data from that slide. Kurt showed us a large map of all the fields that was created to compile our inventory. PNR is using</p>

2008-2009 lifecycle study data. Usually about 20 facilities needing maintenance at any given time and staff try to pick the ones in the worst shape for capital improvements project. Staff go out and evaluate those sites and are looking for the biggest bang for the buck, since we are always facing funding issues staff wanted to get the most out of the money allotted.

Staff from PNR will also work with sport liaisons in SPREC division when determining how to spend operational and capital budget money. Part of the issue is balancing usage, and giving fields down time for maintenance to bring them up to par.

Craig mentioned the contribution policy from last meeting and wants to find out where PNR staff would recommend focusing efforts. Also is DPR upgrading grass fields still? Kurt said main upgrade to grass fields is usually irrigation upgrades. He also noted that our fields are used 3 to 4 times the national average for amount of play on fields. Typically over 800 hours of play annually. If we have better fields we can disperse play amongst fields. Barcroft fields which are generally very good fields get 1,400-1,600 hours of play annually. Greenbrier is at 1,600. There used to be practice/game fields that could rotate. Now everything is a practice and game field at all times. Did some patching to Kenmore 2 years ago and the patches alone cost \$25,000. What they try to do is listen to user groups, doing stuff like seed banking on cool season, and seed bad areas in hopes of regrowth, plugging areas etc. Could do stuff like temp fences etc. But many fields double as open space for community like Quincy. Talks about Bluemont and Stratford baseball fields being fenced. There is a manpower issue when it comes to temp fencing.

Games prefer outfield fence, but not always possible with current facilities. Most work has been completed out of PayGo or bond money in past 5 years. PayGo is the capital side and is usually reserved for larger projects. Try to balance what is spent between rectangular and diamond sports.

Craig mentioned that it would be great if PNR could maintain a price list for a few typical items/maintenance projects under 50K for use with collaboration/donation policy. Want to know what we can get with the money donated. Would be useful for Field Fund Group as well to look at funds for these items.

Kurt did provide a few rough estimates but indicated he would be willing to put together some typical items in that range. Staff will be reaching out to field adoptees in July/August to the help plan for future year. Kurt mentioned that Key School PTA helped install irrigation. Also they are attempting to capture better data on wash-outs to track which fields have repeated issues. They are not dealing with synthetic discussions right now as that will be a part of the PSMP.

<http://projects.arlingtonva.us/public-spaces-master-plan-psmp-update/>

Kurt Louis will get back to commission with some information on project costs under 50K.

Action Items:

III. Community Facility Study-Sal D'Itri (7:30-8:10pm)

The Community Facility Study Group created to look at facility needs, processes, and challenges. The Final report of the workgroup is available online here:

<http://commissions.arlingtonva.us/community-facilities-study/>

Presentation given is here:

http://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/11/CFS_BoardWorkSession_Presentation_2015-1110.pdf

At this time the [Final Report](#) has been provided to the County Board.

Comments: School Projections came up very frequently. Making sure projections were accurate as possible and are they using best methods.

CIP needs to be more open, need a more formal process for community involvement. Bring the County and School Boards together through an advisory commission to look at recommendations. For example Lubber Run site visioning. The Final Report is online and should be required reading for those involved in commissions that interact with facilities. Want feedback from commissions to project into the report.

Heather asked how Sports Commission can be involved. Bring ideas to staff, endorse it, or respond to it?

Slide 26-Strategic planning committee with School and County Boards would be a main desire. The boards already meet 4 times a year so they may be reluctant to do something more. The idea would be to bring the topics to the public eye and have a more formal defined process. Sal said now we have to wait to see what comes back and what they will ultimately adopt because of the group's work.

George T. what's difficult in our county is having the two separate legal entities that control county property and navigating that. Can school and county come together around data and growth rates and share information and debate?

Question about how this study considers Arlington as a part of a larger regional area. Doesn't really cover that, it's more focused on current status and projections for just the county, but projections are often based on the larger area.

IV. Approve Meeting Minutes (8:10-8:15pm) Review and motion to approve meeting minutes, seconded, approved. Introduce Josh Colman as new liaison to the Sports Commission, his first meeting and farewell to outgoing liaison Jennifer Lainhart.

Action Items: Jennifer Lainhart will post October minutes to website.

I. Return to Batting Cages (8:15-8:20) John Foti (visitor) arrived late and missed conversation about batting cages, but wanted to state for the record, that he personally has been hit by a ball in the batting cage at Westover. He said a number of coaches/parents have reported incidents and thought there were 12 separate instances just in Babe Ruth alone. Jennifer Lainhart did indicate that he missed a lot of that conversation but the county's safety specialist Sharon Dudley did inspect and Kurt and Jeff reported that it's safer but it will never be fully safe and that they are still working on netting.

V. Donation Policy Re-Cap and discussion (8:20-8:25) Was covered earlier in the Field Information section.

VI. Williamsburg Lighting Update (8:25-8:40) Justin Wilt provided this update instead of Steve since he was out and Justin was visiting the Commission meeting this day. Work group information can be found here: <http://parks.arlingtonva.us/projects/williamsburg-workgroup/>

Met with planning and zoning and Parks and Recreation staff and other staff. Addressing field issues, questions and concerns. Concerns about zoning for school space and light poles, apparently zoned for only 78ft light poles so would need an exception to get 80ft as recommended. Discussion about process to get zoning changed, also interested in zoning ordinances on noise and the decibel limits as different times and days. Noted that there are exceptions for DPR activities on fields typically. Members wanted to know is noise violations can be added even though there is an exception for DPR activities and does this normally happen in sports context can it be enforced?

The group is heavily weighted with residents from that neighborhood and stacked against lighting. Some of the participants are still bitter about issues with Discovery Elementary school. Justin is imploring commission to step in and help to show a strong showing of community support for lighting and this project. Justin feels like he is the only person there advocating for lighting and a failure here could mean a precedent for future projects that include lighting. 12/9 at 7pm is the next meeting at Williamsburg library.

Question about a place to get news about ongoing projects. Jennifer reminds that most of the ongoing projects are online. There is not a page that lists them all but most events are on county online calendar.

Justin stressed that we need numbers, what more could we do in promoting this, because we need adult voices showing support, because the workgroups collective voice is not. Go to local clubs, but many do not want to ruffle feathers etc. The format of the meeting is not very formal, there are regular visitors who

are able to speak. Want to bring back the idea of the Greenbrier neighborhood relationship with DPR and schools to collaborate on use of the field and lighting etc. For example game on Halloween, went off well with extra police support etc. But right now there are not too many people under 50 years of age on that workgroup. This could set a precedent. This group will make a recommendation to the county board once agreement is made.

Question about recessed land value not validated. County does not have resources to do this analysis but Justin feels like land value does not decrease when lights are put onto field in neighborhood.

Action Items:

Commission members urged to attend meeting on 12/9. Jennifer suggested maybe having some of the workgroup events that we are interested in be posted on our page. Will work with Josh Colman on this.

VII Long Bridge Update
(8:40-8:45)

LBPAC met with John Vihstadt from county board on 11/5. He asked them questions about the approach and thought information should be provided to board about 4 different areas. Public input on distinguishing needs/wants, the process this far and history for the 2 new board members, issue of parking/transportation, the cost/trade-offs that was subject of community outreach thus far. Also how this plan fits in with the PSMP.

The group is continuing to push forward with data and outreach efforts. The PMSP survey (random by household) will have questions related to this work as well. Over summer they did work to collect preferences etc. Want to glean what the priorities are for public.

Also Aquatics Committee's Annual Aquatic Forum is 12/1 in small theater at Washington-Lee, will provide a timeline and information there. More information on Aquatics Committee here:

<http://commissions.arlingtonva.us/sports-commission/aquatics-committee/>

VIII Project and Themes
Update
(8:45-8:52)

Heather reports they created and kicked off gymnastics expansion workgroup with members from boys' team, girls' team, gymnastics classes, Carly Meyer DPR, Asha. Have started on ideas to expand Spring semester, want to still consider alternatives for ball hockey and soccer movement.

IX New Business
(8:40-8:45)

John Foti (visitor) created a proposal. All outdoor sports have seen it, want to look at multipurpose fields that support the greater good. As an example Tuckahoe field renewal project had \$600,000 dollars and were redoing the sod, but this won't create more play time for groups. The proposal asks the county to think outside the box and spend money wisely to increase play time when possible. We don't have the space to just build a new field so we really need to utilize the space we have better. Multipurpose field optimize what we have. We can't buy more property so let's improve what we do have. John met with Board members: John Vihstadt, Jay Fisette and Libby Garvey and has had discussions with Jane Rudolph of DPR.

Commission wanted to get his proposal to County and School Board members to gain more support. John did mention the county has been working with him on

some items for instance providing a tarp for Barcroft fields. If the proposal is submitted to Craig before agenda is complete to get it on the agenda for a vote for December for support of commission members.

Action Items: Craig needs to get the proposal from John to add to Agenda as addendum so that vote be added to agenda for December meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

(8:15pm)

J. Walter Tejada, County Board Liaison

Attest:

Jennifer Lainhart

Jennifer Lainhart, Staff Liaison

